

The Mayor and Council of Hurlock

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MAYOR
JOHN H. AVERY
CLERK / TREASURER
ROBERT MERRIKEN
ATTORNEY

COUNCIL MEMBERS
CHARLES T. CEPHAS, SR.
PARKER J. DURHAM
BONNIE FRANZ
EARL H. MURPHY
JERRY L. RHUE, SR.

MINUTES OPEN SESSION MEETING December 9, 2013 6:00 P.M.

Mayor Spratt called the meeting of December 9, 2013, to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Hurlock Town Office located at 311 Charles Street. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Reverend Paul Bovankovich said the opening prayer. The roll call was then taken. Those in attendance were: Council members Parker Durham, Jerry Rhue, Bonnie Franz, Earl Murphy, Charles Cephas, Mayor Joyce Spratt, Clerk John Avery and Town Attorney, Robert Merriken.

The Agenda was approved with a Motion made by Councilman Rhue. Councilwoman Franz seconded the Motion. With no discussion and no one opposed, the Motion to approve the agenda was passed and carried with a vote of 5-0.

The Minutes of the Open Session Meeting held on November 25, 2013 were approved. Councilman Durham made a Motion to approve the minutes. Councilman Rhue seconded the Motion. With no discussion and no one opposed, the Motion to approve the minutes was passed and carried with a vote of 5-0.

Mayor's Report – Mayor Spratt reminded everyone of the parade being held on Saturday December 14th at noon. She also explained that “Junkyard Christmas” is being sponsored by Mid-Shore Recyclers. There will be a Christmas tree contest with monetary awards of \$500.00, \$250.00, and \$150.00. They will hold an auction after the parade with the proceeds being used to purchase toys for children and will be kept locally. There is also going to be a Home Lighting contest this year on December 23rd. Prizes will be awarded in the amounts of \$100.00, \$75.00, and \$50.00.

There will not be a decision made regarding the Taylor Avenue issue until after the 1st of the year.

Mayor Spratt suggested that for those people that may get behind on water & sewer bills, they could pay on it each month, if that would make it easier for them.

County Councilman Rick Price Report – Councilman Price reported the last County Council Meeting was very short. There was approval of the last capital payment on the Career and Technology Center through the Board of Education. There was a Power Point presentation by Libby Nagel on a fundraiser held in East New Market for the farmers & friends to benefit veterans on the Delmarva Peninsula. The Council voted to appoint him to be the representative for MACo. A bid was awarded to a local contractor to begin repairs on the Elliott Island Bridge. Councilman Price congratulated the new council members for the Town of Hurlock. Mayor Spratt asked Councilman Price to keep her updated regarding the installation of cameras on county school busses.

Department Reports – Chief of Police Les Hutton announced that Main Street would be closing before noon for the Christmas Parade on Saturday to allow for the singers from the Hurlock's Got Talent Show to perform. The whole street will be closed for the parade. The Chief reported that there is severe weather predicted for Tuesday with possible accumulation of snow from 1-3". He encouraged citizens to check with their neighbors and to look out for each other and to alert the police department or fire department if anyone needs help.

David Carrier reported that the fire department has been busy with 23 calls since the last town meeting. As of tonight, Jason Trego will be the new Chief.

Old Business – Councilman Cephas reported he has taken the Open Meetings Act Training. Mr. Merriken stated it is approximately 1 hour long. Mayor Spratt said she and Clerk Avery would take the course online. Mr. Merriken said he would send the website via email to the council members. Mr. Merriken gave a memo regarding the Open Meeting Act to all council members stating that all meetings of the Mayor & Council, with a quorum present, are required to be Open Session. There are 14 exceptions for a meeting to be closed.

Councilman Earl Murphy commented on the cable company still not having the cable buried in Woods Edge. The repairs are under subcontract and Scott Schilling was under the impression that the problem had been solved.

New Business – Clerk Avery explained that there had been an outstanding \$200,000.00 loan from the National Bank of Cambridge that the Town was paying only interest on. This had been negotiated approximately 2 years ago and the Town was paying principle and interest. Currently the balance is \$37,500.00. The last payment is due August 2014. Clerk Avery's recommendation at this point is to pay the balance now and avoid additional approximately \$500.00 interest that would accrue in 8 months. Councilman Cephas made a Motion to pay the balance currently owing to the National Bank of Cambridge. Councilman Murphy seconded the Motion. With no further discussion and on one opposed, the Motion to approve the payoff of the loan to the National Bank of Cambridge was passed and carried with a vote of 5-0.

Mayor Spratt stated that everyone should have a copy of the Treasurer's Report dated December 9, 2013, which is amazing.

Agenda Requests – Mr. John Camp was in attendance as a representative of Chase Development. This company is a developer of The Dollar General Company. Hurlock has been considered for approximately a year and a half to locate a Dollar General Store. Property on S. Main Street was a consideration, but would have to be rezoned Commercial. Mr. Camp gave each council member a copy of the plat. The building would be 9,100 sq. ft. building. It could take approximately 6 months for site work and building time. The Mayor asked if residents had any questions and opened up the subject for discussion. Bobby C. asked why Hurlock does not have a food store. Mayor Spratt replied the Town tried to obtain a Food Lion 5 years ago. Mayor Spratt and Councilman Cephas were part of those meetings. Other food chains have been contacted over the years, but the town is not large enough for a chain grocery store. Councilman Durham stated he was in favor of the plan. It was noted that the Council could not approve the rezoning; the Planning & Zoning Commission would have to recommend that first. Councilman Rhue felt that it could help in rehabilitating the downtown area. Councilman Murphy asked if Dollar General is ready to purchase the property. Mr. Camp acknowledged that the purchase has been approved at corporate level. Mayor Spratt asked for a consensus of opinion from the Council. Councilman Murphy asked what the employment would be for a store of this size. The answer was approximately 12. The councilmen all agreed they were in favor. Clerk Avery explained that there would be Planning & Zoning hearings. Property owners affected by the decision and residents of the Town would be asked for their input.

Comments from Council Members – Councilman Murphy mentioned a rebar in up and with it being bent over, it could be a road hazard. It is located at the railroad crossing. Clerk Avery responded he thinks it is not rebar, it is one of the bolts that is associated with the crossing. The Maryland Transit Administration is responsible for that situation and they are supposed to rebuild those crossings in 2014. Councilman Murphy asked about progress with the commercial building on Mill Street. Clerk Avery responded he doesn't think there is any clear plan for the building. Tom McCoy owns the building. Councilman Murphy expressed concern regarding the history of the Town and saving older buildings. He encouraged citizens to support local businesses; there is a grocery store in town, please visit them. They go out of their way to help you and if there is an item you would like them to carry in the store they will do their best to accommodate you. Councilman Murphy also announced the Baptist Church on N. Main Street is presenting a play, "Searching for the King", at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday December 15th. Council members Franz and Rhue did not have any comments. Councilman Durham spoke about the bad weather coming through with more to come. The Lions Club will have the luminaries again this year on December 21st

Mayor Spratt announced the new public works employee began work on this day.

Comments from Public - Blanche Powell announced she had trimmed one of the trees on Taylor Avenue and thought it would make a big difference if all the trees were trimmed.

Bobby C asked if the Town has the money to build a youth center. Mayor Spratt answered that it is much more than just the cost of a building. There is staffing, liability, maintenance, insurance, etc. The Mayor said she has spoken to other towns and found that it doesn't work. Councilman Murphy had a list of contacts of where to go to get youth involved. There needs to be more conversation. Mayor Spratt felt that this should fall back to the parents. They need to get their children involved in activities. Teachers do a lot with children at the schools. There were 300 children involved in Little League this year. The Town supports the program by dragging and lining of the ball fields.

Mayor Spratt stated the Town tries to help when possible. Children could get involved in church and school activities. She would love to see a bowling alley and a theatre. Possibly even have family movie nights. If Berlin can do what they have done to transform their town, Hurlock should be able to do that also. The vice-president of operations of AMICK is going to fly in from South Caroline on Saturday and be the Grand Marshall for the Christmas parade. Mr. Charles Coulbourn will serve as Town Marshall in the parade and he is so excited.

David Carrier announced the fire department has a cadet program for ages 16-18 and will provide training. For information see Jerry Rhue.

A citizen thanked the council for Prospect Park being locked at night. The Mayor praised the police department.

Councilman Murphy made a Motion that Councilman Cephas be the designee for the Open Meeting Act training. Councilman Rhue seconded the Motion. With no discussion and no one opposed, the Motion was passed and carried.

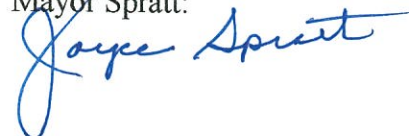
With no further business or discussion, Councilman Cephas made a Motion to adjourn the Open Session Meeting to move into an Open Work Session. Councilman Rhue seconded the Motion. With all in favor and no one opposed, the meeting was adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

Respectively submitted,


John Avery
Clerk/Treasurer

Approved:

Mayor Spratt:



Councilmembers:

Rev. Charles T. Coulbourn

Earl H. Murphy Jr.

Parker

Bonnie Mary

MOTIONS AND VOTES BY COUNCIL MEMBERS OPEN SESSION MEETING DECEMBER 9, 2013

Motion to approve the Agenda was made by Councilman Durham. Councilwoman Franz seconded the Motion and with no discussion and no one opposed the Motion was passed and carried with a vote of 5-0.

Motion to approve Minutes of November 25, 2013 was made by Councilman Durham. Councilman Rhue seconded the Motion. With no discussion and no one opposed, the Motion was passed and carried with a vote of 5-0.

Motion was made by Councilman Cephas to approve payment to the National Bank of Cambridge, the current balance of \$37,500.00. Councilman Murphy seconded the Motion. With no discussion and no one opposed, the Motion was passed and carried with a vote of 5-0.

Motion was made by Councilman Murphy to be the Designee for the Open Meetings Act training. Councilman Rhue seconded the Motion. With no discussion and no one opposed, the Motion was passed and carried with a vote of 5-0.

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